

9 BREASTFEEDING FACT SHEET

WEANING

Here are some tips to help when you have decided to stop breastfeeding. **DO NOT** give your baby regular cow's milk until he is at least 1 year old. Give breast milk or formula.

Babies Up to 4 Months Old

Slow weaning is best for you and your baby. Replace 1 breastfeeding a day with bottle feeding. Start with the feeding he is least interested in. Be sure to hold him while giving him the bottle. Cuddle and play with your baby more at this time.

Do this for a few days until your milk supply has adjusted. Then stop a second breastfeeding and wait for your milk supply to adjust. Continue until baby is weaned. Watch him for any problems like rashes, spitting up, increased fussiness or trouble passing stools (pooping). This may be from an allergy to formula. Check with your health care provider if there are problems.

Babies 5 to 12 Months Old

Slow weaning is still important to keep your breasts from getting engorged with breast milk and to help your baby adjust. Follow the steps in the section above. You can have your baby use a cup at this age to drink his formula or breast milk. Be patient and consistent. Play and cuddle more with your baby. Bedtime may be his favorite nursing, so save that one for last. Some babies "go on strike" and refuse to nurse during this time. This can be a good time to wean.



BREASTFEEDING TRIAGE TOOL

Toddlers 1 to 2 Years Old

At this age your baby is nursing for many reasons – food, comfort, relaxation and soothing. Your toddler is separating from you and he may need several months to wean. Try shortening the nursing or postponing nursing to a more convenient time. Offer other foods, like milk in a special cup. Distract him with other activities. Be patient and supportive of your toddler during this change.

The Child Over 3 Years Old

Usually weaning a child over 3 is fairly easy. Often he is nursing only once or twice a day. He may lose interest on his own. Plan a time to stop nursing with your child. Remind him often of this time as it gets closer. Many children enjoy a celebration of this milestone.

Sudden Weaning

If you find you must stop breastfeeding all at once, your breasts may get overfilled with milk. This can be painful or uncomfortable. Your breasts will gradually stop making milk. To relieve the fullness:

- Pump just enough milk to be comfortable (pumping stimulates milk production). Gradually space out the pumping sessions so that you stimulate less milk production.
- Put ice packs on your breasts.
- Put chilled cabbage leaves inside your bra.
- Combination birth control pills may decrease milk supply.
- Take ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) for pain.
- Parlodel/Bromocriptine (a prescription medicine) is not recommended.